

MALAY PROVERBS.

BY W. E. MAXWELL.

198. *Hidop dikandong adat mati dikandong tanah.*

“In life we are encompassed by regulations, in death by the mould of the grave.”

An expression of submission, humility or resignation. Quoted when deferring to the order of a superior *e. g.* by a ryot on hearing the sentence or decision of a raja or chief.

199. *Hujan mas di negri orang,
Hujan batu di negri sendiri,
Baik juga di negri sendiri.*

“Though it rain gold in the land of strangers and stone in our own, yet is it better to be in our own country.”

Chaque oiseau trouve son nid beau.

There is no place like home.

Patricæ fumus igne alieno luculentior.

200. *Harapkan Si Untut menggamit kain koyak di upahkan.*

“Trust the man who has elephantiasis to do anything! Why you must pay him even to pick up a torn garment!”

Persons afflicted with elephantiasis (a disease not uncommon in Malay countries) are proverbial among Malays for extreme laziness.

Menggamit, I take to mean here to pick up with the fingers, but it might also mean in this context to “put the fingers through” the hole in a torn garment and to tear it more. *Gamit* means literally to beckon with the hand.

201. *Ai bukan buruh untong chelaka ayam padi masak makan ka utan.*

“Alas! what accursed misfortune is mine that the fowl when the *padi* is ripe, should seek its food in the jungle!”

To eat abroad when there is food at home, or to sleep out when there is a roof of one's own (*rumah ada berdinding bertandang tidor*) are evidence of criminal misconduct according to the menangkabau code.

202. *Usahlah aku ta'endah ada aku pandang adap, tiada aku pandang belakang.*

“Never mind, I value you not, I look ahead of me, not behind me.”

A common phrase when a quarrel takes place between two people closely connected by friendship or relationship, husband and wife for instance. An astonishing amount of spite can be put by a vituperative Malay into the phrase “*Pergilah, aku ta'endah*” (Begone, I hold thee of no account) with an extra emphasis on the first syllable of the last word. The last part of the sentence is equivalent to “there are as good fish in the sea as ever came out of it.”

203. *Ampat gasal lima genap.*

Four is odd and five is even. See No. 137.

204. *Engkap-engkip bagei rumput tengah jalan.*

Coming and going, like grass in the middle of a path.

Said of a man who is always in bad health, like grass constantly trodden down by the feet of passers-by, he will not flourish satisfactorily and yet will not die outright.

205. *Ai ka-lagi-lagi bagei blanda minta tanah.*

O more, more! like the Dutchmen asking for land.

Traditions of the Dutch, who had a factory on the Perak river in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, still linger among the Perak Malays. This proverb, which is directed against greediness in general, probably originated in some forgotten transaction between the early Dutch traders and the Raja with whom they bargained for a site for their settlement.

206. *Alah mahu bertimbang enggah chungkil amris akan pembaiarnia.*

“He will accept defeat (in a suit or dispute about money) but refuses to pay and offers his throat to be pierced is satisfaction.”

Illustration of the difficulty of extorting payment from an Eastern debtor. Though he has the means to pay and admits his liability, he will not produce the money except with the greatest reluctance and often not until after strenuous efforts to soften his creditor's heart or shame him in the presence of bystanders (always ready to blame want of generosity in others) by offering his life-blood to the unfortunate man who is only asking his due.

Enggah=*enggan*.

Amris, the carotid artery? I do not find this word in any dictionary.

207. *Ingat antara bulum kena,
Jimat antara bulum habis.*

“Reflect before anything has happened;

“Save before everything has gone.”

Think while there is yet time; be sparing while there is still something to save. A maxim quoted sententiously by Malay advisers when some important step is being discussed prior to action being taken.

A somewhat similar one, “*Meniesal dahulu jadi pendapatan, meniesal kamdian apa ta guna.*” To repent first is gain, to repent afterwards is useless), will be found, in a slightly different form, in Klinkert's collection.

A Malay newspaper which I saw lately quoted the proverb in the following versified form.

Besar pilang dengan apitan

Besar galah apa gunania

“*Sesah dahulu pendapatan*

Sesal kamdian apa gunania.”

208. *Apa gadohkan? pengayu sama di tangan, prahu sama di ayer.*

“Why be quarrelsome? We have each got paddles in our hands and boats in the water.”

A phrase to express readiness to fight, when two Malay chiefs, each of whom "*lalu buat*" (is capable of taking the offensive), cannot settle their disputes amicably.

209. *Alah bisa buat biasa.*

"Venom loses the day when met by experience." Hatred and prejudice are powerless in proportion as familiarity with the position gives the person against whom they are directed the means of counteracting them.

Quoting this proverb (not without political significance), an old Perak Malay once called my attention to the eagle on the Mexican dollar, which is represented as holding a snake in its talons. The skilful way in which bird, guided by instinct, holds its adversary in a position in which it cannot use its venomous fangs seemed to the Malay to illustrate his text admirably.

210. *Orang kaya jangan digan.*

Orang miskin jangan dihina.

"Do not worship the rich or condemn the poor."

Be contented with thy lot.

Gan, to admire, pay court to, fawn upon.

211. *Orang berdendang di pentasnya.*

Orang beraja di hatinia.

A man sings on his own sleeping-place and is sovereign in his own heart."

"A man of a contented mind will make himself happy in his own way.

Pentas, a sleeping platform, is a less elaborate bedstead than the *geta* and *katil* used by well-to-do Malays.

212. *Usahlah teman di mandi pagi.*

"You need not wait on me at the morning ablutions.

Said in deprecation of open flattery. It is a mark of respect and solicitude among Malays, as among other Eastern nations, to attend another to the bath, to wash his feet or clothes, to rub or shampoo him etc. Often these attentions are not altogether disinterested, but are paid to a guest or stranger from whom the operator hopes to get some advan-

tage. Hence this blunt saying "You need not come to my morning bath" which is equivalent to "I see through your flattery."

Teman is here used for the personal pronoun. In this sense it is commonly used in Perak between persons whose rank is the same or nearly so. This implied equality of rank characterises the word when it is used in the signification of "a companion" or "to accompany," a point which is missed, I think, in Favre's dictionary. To accompany as a *teman* is "to accompany for a short way." *i. e.* as a friend, or as a mark of politeness.

213. *Ayam terlepas tangan bawa taki.*

"The fowl has escaped and the hand is left dirty."

Said in ridicule of a person who loses something which he looked upon as secured and finds himself an object of general derision, *e. g.* a Malay whose *fiancée*, after all the preliminaries have been arranged, jilts him and marries another.

214. *Bagei si-kudong dapat chin-chin.*

"Like finding a ring to one who has lost his hand."

(Lrr. Like the lopped-one who gets a ring).

A sarcastic phrase aimed at persons who come in for a stroke of good fortune which their humble condition and habits of life prevent them from turning to account.

215. *Bagei bersuloh tengah hari.*

"Like carrying a light in the day time."

Unnecessary trouble or waste of power, "idle and ridiculous excess."

216. *Bagei petei sisa pengait.*

"Like *petei* beans, the leavings of the hook."

Not worth the trouble of taking, like the pods left here and there on the tree after the crop has been plucked.

Petei "cet arbre (*Parkia speciosa*) produit une espèce de "gros haricots que les naturels mangent comme hors "d'œuvre, malgré leur odeur forte et désagréable." Favre. *Anagyris* L. Marsden.

217. *Bagei kuniet dengan kapor.*

“Like turmeric when it meets lime.”

A simile illustrative of the close sympathy and feeling existing between two intimate friends. (*sama sarati* or *sama sajodo*.) Malays say that the prepared lime used with betelnut, if it is touched with turmeric, is at once stained with a bright yellow colour which spreads through the whole mass.

218. *Ber-telan-telan bagei panas di belukar.*

“Striking unequally like sunshine in a thicket.” See No. 189.

Ber-telan-telan, marked in spots, unevenly or unequally: e.g. a paper stained with oil spilt upon it may be said to be *bertelan-telan*.

219. *Bagi kapak masok meminang.*

“Like an axe undertaking marriage negotiations.” The axe seems to be a popular figure to denote rough, coarse conduct. The extreme of roughness is reached when the uncompromising instrument is imagined engaging in affairs in which domestic diplomacy and politeness exhaust themselves.

220. *Bagei jampok ka-siangan hari.*

“Like an owl in the day time.”

To sit mute and foolish, like a man who has suffered a public rebuke in the *Majlis*, or assembly, for improper speech or conduct.

221. *Bingong ta'dapat diajar, cherdek ta'dapat diikut.*

“In his folly he is not to be corrected, in his shrewdness he is not to be followed.” Or, less literally,

“Impatient of instruction where he is ignorant, and an unsafe guide where he possesses shrewdness.”

A proverbial phrase to describe (and condemn) a type of character to be met with among Malays as among other nations.

222. *Bersarak sarası hilang, bercherei sarası mati.*

“Parting feels like loss, separation feels like death.”

A sentiment, tinged with the necessary amount of Oriental exaggeration, to express excessive affection.

223. *Bir titeh jangan tumpah.*

"Lose a drop so long as you do not spill the whole."

It is wise to sacrifice a little if thereby the loss of the whole can be prevented. A similar expression is "*Takut titeh lalu tumpah.*" "From fear of losing a drop the whole is spilt."

224. *Burong yang liar jangan di lepaskan,
Khabar yang mustehil jangan di dengarkan.*

"Do not let loose an untamed bird,
Hearken not to impossible stories."

To give circulation to idle rumours is like setting a wild bird at liberty. You don't know where it may settle next.

225. *Busut juga di tambun anei-anei.*

"Hillocks even are piled up by white ants."

Great things may be achieved by perseverance.

226. *Berpesan berturut, berserah berkahandak hati.*

"To commission another and then accompany him; to hand over a thing and then long for it back again."

Quoted in ridicule of an uncertain and capricious disposition.

227. *Badan bersudara mas ta'kan saudara,
Kasih saudara sama ada,
Kasih bapa menokok harta yang ada,
Kasih mah samata (sama rata) jalan ;
Kasih sahabat sama binasa.*

Relationship is of the body, there is no relationship of gold; the love of mere relations is equal on both sides; a father's love adds to the store (of his children); a mother's love follows them every where, but the love which exists between friends is such that they will die together.

228. *Barang dimana pun pantat priuk itu hitam juga.*

"Whatever you may do, the bottom of the pot will still be black."

You cannot make the African white. A person of low origin will always carry about the evidence of it with him.

229. *Buat nasi tambah.*

“To provide a supplementary dish of rice.”

To have concubines as well as the lawful number of wives. At a Malay feast the guests are helped to rice by the attendants, but a large dish of rice is set before them as well, from which they are at liberty to help themselves when they feel inclined. This is called *nasi tambah*.

230. *Bir puteh tulang jangan puteh mata.*

“Let the bones whiten, but not the eyes!”

Death before dishonour.

231. *Bir alah meniabong asa akan menang sorak.”*

“Covering defeat in the cock-pit by making the greatest noise.” Carrying off defeat by swagger.

Said of any one who attempts to conceal his feelings of chagrin or disappointment consequent on grief or loss, by insincere boasting or expressions of satisfaction.

232. *Bunga bersunting sudah akan layu.*

“A flower worn as an ornament withers when done with.”

The usual trite comparison between flowers and feminine charms. The same idea in different language will be found in Favre's Dictionary *sub voce* bunga.

233. *Badannia bulih dimilik hatinia tiada dimilik.*

“The body may be possessed, but the affections cannot be coerced.”

234. *Bir badan penat asakan hati suka.*

“Never mind the fatigue of the body so long as the heart is cheerful.”

A slave will do twice as much work if kept in good humour by considerate treatment.

235. *Bir jatuh terletak jangan jatuh terampas.*

“Let it fall as if set down, not as if thrown down.”

Temper a refusal with civility, so as to send away the unsuccessful applicant without having given cause for offence; in other words let a man down gently, not "with a run."

236. *Baik berjagong-jagong antara padi masak.*

"It is well to put up with maize until the *padi* be ripe."

"Half a loaf is better than no bread."

Compare the following form in "Hikayat Abdullah."

"*Tiada rotan akar pun berguna.*" When there is no rattan, one must use *lianes*.

237. *Tersinget-singet bagei patong dibawa rebah.*

"Bending about like the *patong* fish (in a pool) under a fallen tree."

An ironical comparison popularly used in Perak in describing the affected graces of a conceited person. (See No. 240).

238. *Ter-lonchat-lonchat bagei ulat pinang.*

"Hopping about like a betel-nut worm."

Said of a restless person who will not remain still in one place, but is always on the move.

The *ulat pinang* is a small maggot whose mode of locomotion is by a series of leaps.

239. *Ter-kesut-kesut bagei anak tidak di-aku.*

"Moving along the floor, like a child whose parent will not notice it."

Said of a man who is in disgrace with his superior, *e. g.* a ryot with his chief, or a slave with his master. He may crawl after his lord praying to be taken back into favour, but gets nothing but cold neglect.

240. *Ter-sendeng-sendeng bagei sepat di-bawah mangkuang.*

"Swaying from side to side like the *sepat* fish under the shade of the *mangkuang*" another simile used in ridiculing affected grace of motion. (See No. 237.)

The *sepat* is a small fresh-water fish with a very thin body. As it swims along among the thorny *mangkuang* leaves, which dip into a pool, it bends gracefully over from side to

side as if to avoid the thorns. These fish are very plentiful in Kedah and about Kuala Muda where they are salted and exported.

241. *Ter-nanti-nanti bagei berlaki-kan rajah.*

"Put off repeatedly, as if a royal wedding were in progress."

An allusion to the proverbial unpunctuality of Malay Rajas.

242. *Ter-layang-layang bagei bulu sa'lei.*

"Wafted about like a feather."

Always alone, wherever fortune may send him or whatever business he may undertake. Said of an orphan or stranger.

243. *Ter-chachak bagei lembing ter-gadei.*

"Stuck up straight like a pawned spear."

Said of a person who stands about uncomfortably instead of sitting down sociably with others.

244. *Ter-jerib-jerib bagei kucing biang.*

"Squalling continually like a noisy cat."

Said of a talkative person whose tongue is never still.

Biang, is not to be found in the dictionaries, but it is a common word for the cry of a cat and is evidently imitated from the sound.

245. *Ter-grenying bagei anjing disuwa antan.*

"Shewing his teeth, like a dog stirred up with a pole."

An uncomplimentary comparison used of a person who is always on the grin."

Grenying=*krenyit* or *krising* to snarl, shew the teeth, etc. *Suwa*. To put at, e. g. a gamecock at another. *Suwa antan*. To make a drive (at a dog) with a rice-poun der (on purpose to make it angry).

246. *Terbakar kampong kalihatan asap.*

Terbakar hati siapa akan tahu.

"When a village is burned there is smoke to be seen.

But the heart may be in flames and yet no one know it."

Who can tell the troubles of a person who suffers and makes no sign?

247. *Tuba binasa kan ta' dapat.*

"The *tuba* is spoilt, but no fish have been got."

He has come to the end of his capital without having accomplished his object.

Klinkert gives a similar proverb, which is quoted in Favre's dictionary (*sub voce* umpan), but the meaning given in the latter is not, I venture to think, the correct one.

Habis umpan kerung-kerung tiada dapat.

"The bait is all finished, but no *kerung-kerung* fish have been caught."

To have one's trouble for nothing.

248. *Tuah melambong tinggi,
Chelaka menimpa badan.*

"Good luck has soared aloft and the body is weighed down by misfortune."

Malays commonly ascribe success to good luck and have the firmest faith in lucky days, lucky marks, lucky animals and lucky persons. The two lines above quoted are applied proverbially to some one whose luck has abandoned him or his family, and who is now experiencing the frowns of fortune. The phrase occurs in the *Undang-undang* of Perak, with a number of others inculcating the hopelessness of avoiding predestined misfortune.

Lambong is an expression used for the start given to a kite by the person who launches it upwards.

249. *Ter-kejar-kejar bagei kucing jatuh anak.*

"Hunting about like a cat which has dropped a kitten."

Said of the movements of a person who bustles about in a flurried and excited manner.

250. *Turut hati yang gram hilang takut timbul brani.*

"If you give way to a fiery temper prudence disappears and boldness succeeds it."

The best commentary on this maxim is the advice of an old Malay, "go into a new country as hens, not as cocks. "If you go as cocks, ready to take offence at everything, "you will not be there for three months before there is "some fatal collision."

251. *Tampat makan jangan di berak.*

"Do not pollute the place where you have eaten."

A homely and common proverb conveying an injunction to gratitude. Do not return evil for good, or bite the hand that feeds you.

252. *Tega sudah berdiri habis.*

"Nothing to do but to stand up."

Ready to start at a moment's notice with no preparations to make.

253. *Ta'bertepat janji, ta'bertiban taroh, ta'bertangkap mangmang, alah di darat sahja.*

"He who does not keep his appointment, who does not put down his stakes, or who does not accept the challenge is defeated before ever the water is reached."

An allusion to the various incidents of the ordeal by diving, a method of deciding a disputed point which was occasionally resorted to in Perak in former times. I got the following account of the manner of conducting the ordeal from a Malay chief who saw it carried out once at Tanjong Sanendang near Pasir Salu in the reign of Sultan Abdullah Mohamed Shah, father of the present Raja Muda Yusuf.

The ordeal by diving requires the sanction of the Sultan himself and must be conducted in the presence of the Orang Besar Ampat, or Four Chiefs of the first rank. If two disputants in an important question agree to settle their difference in this way they apply to the Raja who fixes a day (usually three days off) for the purpose, and orders that a certain sum of money shall abide the event. This appointment of time and place is the first stage in the proceedings and is called *bertepat janji* and the laying of the bet or deposit of stakes is called *bertiban taroh*. On the day appointed the parties attend with their friends at the Raja's *balei* and there, in the presence of the Court, a *krani* writes down a solemn declaration for each person, each maintaining *təq*

truth of his side of the question. The first, invoking the name of God, the intercession of the Prophet and the tombs of the deceased Sultans of the country, asserts the affirmative proposition, and his adversary with the same solemnity records his denial. This is called *bertangkap mangmang* or "taking up the challenge." Each paper is then carefully rolled up by the *krani* and is placed by him in a separate bamboo tube; the ends of both are then sealed up. When thus prepared the bamboo tubes are exactly alike and no one, not even the *krani*, can tell which contains the assertion, and which the denial. Two boys are then selected, one of the bamboos is given to each, and they are led down to the river, where the Raja and Chiefs take up their station, and the people flock down in crowds. Two stakes have been driven into the bed of the river in a pool previously selected, and the boys are placed beside them, up to their necks in water. A pole is placed horizontally on their heads, and on a given signal this is pressed downwards and the boys are made to sink at the same moment. Each holds on to his post under water and remains below as long as he can. As soon as one gives in and appears above water his bamboo tube is snatched from him and hurled far out into the stream. The victor is led up in triumph to the *balei* and the crowd surges up to hear the result. His bamboo is then opened and the winner declared.

The Perak Malays believe this to be an infallible test of the truth of a cause. The boy who holds the false declaration is half-drowned they say, as soon as his head is under water, whereas the champion of the truth is able to remain below until the bystanders drag the post out of the river, with the boy still clinging to it. Such is the power of the truth backed by the sacred names and persons invoked!

The loser is often fined in addition to suffering the loss of his stakes (one half of which goes to the Raja). He also has to pay the customary fees, namely, \$6.25 for the use of the *balei*, \$12.50 to the *krani* and \$5 to each of the boys.

This ordeal is not peculiar to Perak. I find a short description of a similar custom in Pegu in Hamilton's "New Accounts of the East Indies" (1727). In Pegu, he says, the ordeal by water is managed "by driving a stake of wood into a river and making the accuser and accused take hold of the stake and keep their heads and bodies under water, and he who stays longest under water is the person to be credited."

Mang-mang means accusation. This word must not be confounded with *mong-mong*, (a brass gong, larger than the kind called *chanang*, which is beaten when a Royal proclamation is published. See *Sijara Malayu* p. 83.

254. *Telinga rabbit di pasang subang.*

Kaki untut di pakei-kan gelang.

“In the torn ear an earring is fastened

On the swollen leg a bangle is clasped.”

Said of any arrangement in which a want of fitness or suitability is apparent. “A beggar on horseback.” Compare No. 215.

Untut elephantiasis.

255. *Jika ada padi berhampalah.*

Jika ada hati berasalah.

“In all *padi* there is chaff, but

In every heart there should be feeling.”

Do not employ a person who is so insensible to right feeling as to pay no attention to rebuke or remonstrance. Get rid of him as you would of the chaff in your corn. “Le sage entend á demi mot.”

256. *Jika tiada tersapu arang di muka, deri hidop baik-lah mati.*

“If the black stain on the face cannot be wiped out death itself is preferable to life.”

If revenge for an injury is impossible, life with dishonour is not worth having. (See No. 3.)

257. *Jika benih yang baik jatuh ka laut menjadi pulau.*

“Provided that the seed be good, if it drop into the sea it will form an island.”

As many of their proverbs shew, the Malays are intensely aristocratic in their principles and have the firmest faith in good blood and highbreeding. The phrase here quoted conveys the popular belief that a man of good family will flourish wherever he settle, and will draw others after him.

258. *Jangan ditentang matahari chondong*
Takut mengikut jalan ta' berantas.

“Look not on the setting sun for fear that you may be led on untrodden paths.”

Sunset is the time for spells and incantations; on lovers this period of the day is supposed to have a particularly powerful effect. To them therefore this advice is addressed. Under the influence of unseen spells at this hour they may be induced to throw off all caution, and leave their homes to face unknown dangers and difficulties.

Rantas, berantas, To clear a path through jungle by cutting down the underwood.

259. *Jalan mati lagi dichuba,*
Inikan pula jalan binasa.

“Men venture even on the path of death,
 “This, at the worst, is but that of ruin.”

Trade and commerce do not involve such risks as some other undertakings. Where men can be found to risk their lives in other pursuits, the chance of ruin should be faced with equanimity!

260. *Jangan bagei orang berjudi*
Alah handak membalas, menang handak lagi.

“Don't be like the gambler, who if he loses wants his revenge, and if he wins longs for more.”

Do not start in any evil course in which you will find it difficult to stop yourself. Reformation is difficult. “*Il n'y a que le premier pas qui coûte.*”

261. *Jikalau dudok diatas chian amas lamunkan hati tiada senang.*

“What if one sits on a gold cushion, if it be with an unquiet mind?”

Poverty and independence are better than wealth, if it is attended with unhappiness.

262. *Jikalau tiada rial di pinggang
Sudara yang rapat menjadi renggang.*

“When you have no money in your pocket
“Your closest friends become distant.”

*Tempore felici multi munerantur amici.
Si fortuna perit, nullus amicus erit. Ovid.*

263. *Changkat sama di daki, hurah sama di turun.*

“Together we have climbed the hills, together we have
gone down the valleys.”

Our expression “the ups and downs of life” corresponds
closely with the Malay metaphor.

264. *Cherdek, makan si bingung
Tidor, makan si jaga.*

“The shrewd devours the dull ;
“The sleeper falls a prey to the wakeful.”

Every one for himself. The Malay notion, evidently, of
“natural selection” and the “survival of the fittest.”

265. *Chüba-chüba menanam mumbang
Jikalau hidup turus negri.*

“Try to plant a green Cocoanut
“If it lives it will be the pillar of the State.”

To carry through successfully an enterprise which any
one else would give up as hopeless is certain to result in
honour and distinction.

Sometimes quoted as a *pantun* ;

*Lomba-lomba main gelombang
Riaknya sampei ka Indragiri
Choba-choba menanam mumbang
Jika hidup turus negri.*

266. *Di titek blah di palu blah
Tembikar juga akan jadinia.*

“Split when tapped and split when struck ;
“Nothing for it but to become potsherd,”

Defeat must be accepted when there is no alternative, and death must be faced valiantly.

“How can a man die better
Than facing fearful odds?” Macaulay.

267. *Dahulu kata bertepat, kamdiin kata berchari.*

“First he acknowledged it, now he seeks an excuse.”

A phrase taken from the *Undang-undang Menangkabau*, and commonly employed in Perak in describing a breach of faith.

268. *Ditindeh yang brat dililit yang panjang.*

“Borne down by the heavy and enfolded in the coils of the long.”

Illustrative of the powerlessness of the humble to resist anything that may be done to them by the rich and great. See No. 45.

269. *Dilaut angkatan didarat krapatan.*

“A fleet for the sea and an army for the field.”

An idiomatic way of describing Malay armaments, just as we speak of “horse, foot and artillery.”

270. *Di turutkan gatal tiba ka tulang.*

“To pursue an itching sore till the bone is reached.”

To give way to the inclinations or passions “to the bitter end.” To indulge in unreasoning anger until a disaster is the result.

271. *Deripada sahabat dengan orang yang bodoh baik berstru dengan orang berakal.*

“Enmity with a wise man is better than friendship with a fool.”

Because the first may some day be a friend, whereas no advantage can ever result from the society of the latter.

272. *Dia ta' handak sahya pun ta' sior.*

“She doesn't care for me and I have no inclination for her. A slang phrase (Perak) to express mutual dislike, the peculiarity of which consists in the use of the last word (*sior*) which is not to be found in any dictionary; *sior* is synonymous with *ingin*.

273. *Digantong tinggi direndam basah.*

“Hanged up he accepts his high position, ducked in a pond he takes his wetting meekly.”

Said of an old retainer who will submit uncomplainingly to any severity or oppression on the part of his master.

274. *Disuroh pergi dipanggil datang.*

“To go when told and come when bidden.”

To be at the beck and call of another. “Come and he cometh, do this and he doeth it.” Two of the duties of a ryot to his Punghulu as laid down in the Menangkabau Code.

275. *Dikokah di menampal pipi.*

Dibakar di melilit puntong.

“It smites the cheek of him who bites it;
It twists itself round the brand that would consume it.”

The ill treatment or oppression of a slave or dependent by his master reacts on the oppressor, just as some tough substance, when it gives way, will fly back in the face of him who drags it with his teeth, or as something not easily inflammable, like hide for instance, will curl in the flames till it encircles, perhaps, one of the brands which feeds them.

276. *Dengar kata enggang makan burh kaluluh*

Dengar kata orang tersorak ka-lubuk.

“To listen to the call of the *enggang* is to eat fallen fruit; to heed what people say is to shout into a pool.”

It is worse than useless to pay attention to rumour.

Enggang. The rhinoceros-bird. *Buceros.* See No. 1.

277. *Seperti pipit menelan jagong.*

“Like a sparrow swallowing a grain of maize.” “Too much for him.” A poor man must not aspire to a rich man’s daughter.

278. *Seperti bras kumbah dijual ta’laku, ditanak ta’mual.*

“Like spoilt rice which will fetch nothing if sold and will not swell when boiled.

“Good for nothing.” See No. 9.

Another version is given by *Klinkert* ; “ *Sa’kutuk bras basah ditampi ta’berlayang diindang ta’berantah hujungnia tiada di sudu ulih itek.*” A measure of wet rice though winnowed will not fly, though sifted will not become clean, and after every thing the ducks won’t look at it.

Kumba, useless, spoilt.

Mual. To swell, as good rice does in boiling.

279. *Nyletek bagei bara bilah.*

“Writhing like a smouldering stick.”

Said contemptuously of immodest conduct or unnecessary swagger. Like a burning stick, which must needs turn and twist in the flames to attract attention! *Nyletek-mengletek*, (*Lintik*) *Perak*. See Nos. 237 and 240.

280. *Paksa tekukur padi rebah.*

Paksa tikus rengkiyang terbuka.

“The wood-pigeon’s opportunity is the fallen corn
The mouse’s opportunity is the open granary.”

When precaution is relaxed, then is the time to help oneself.

281. *Pisang sa’ sikat susu sa’ blanga*

Tanda sa’pakat makan sama-sama.

“A bunch of plantains and a pot of milk ;

“A token of friendship is to eat together.”

Though the fare be humble, to share a meal together is a pledge of friendship.

282. *Kalau ta’bermariaim baiklah diam,*

Kalau ta’berlela baik meridla-ridla,

Kalau tiada snapang baik bagi jalan lapang,

Kalau tiada padi sa’barang kreja ta’jadi,

Kalau tiada bras kreja tiada dras,

Kalau ta’berwang kamana pergi terbuang,

Kalau ta’berduit kamana pergi terchuwit-chuwit.

“If you have no guns, better hold your tongue ;

If you are without a *lela*, best say you are satisfied ;

If unprovided with muskets give me a wide berth ;

If you are without *padi* your undertaking won’t succeed ;

If you have no rice your progress won’t be rapid ;

If you lack money you will be an outcast wherever you go ;

If you haven’t a copper you will wander all alone.”

A poetical challenge sent by a Perak chief to an adversary. It led to tragical consequences and has now passed into a proverb in the country. The chief in question was a former Shahbandar, to whom one Panglima Prang Smahon complained of an alleged insult to his family. The Shahbandar answered in the preceding lines. A few days later the Panglima Prang, with three companions, watched for him on the river bank and killed him as he was returning to his house after ablution before the *maghrib* prayers.

283. *Kalau getah memilih kalau daun melayang.*

“Gutta trickles down, but a leaf is wafted away.”

The substantial remains, but the worthless disappears. One man leaves behind him solid proof of his character, while another vanishes like a withered leaf and is missed by no one.

284. *Kesat daun pimpin, kalau kesat daun labu bulih di chelor.*

“The *pimpin* leaf is rough to the touch; so is the pumpkin leaf, but the latter may be boiled (for food).”

There is all the difference in the world in the view we take of strangers and that in which we regard our own relations. The former, however well we may come to know them, can never be like our own blood, while with the latter, even though estrangement take place reconciliation is always possible. *Daun pimpin*, is described as a hard, rough leaf which no immersion in boiling water will render less rough and hard.

Chelor. To immerse in boiling water: to cook by boiling when the thing to be cooked is plunged in water already at the boil; unlike *rebus* which is to boil something put into the water when cold.

The Malays are great observers of ties of relationship. Family connections however distant are recognised. The difference to a man between his relations and persons not connected with him by blood or marriage is, they say, as the difference between flesh and fish; “*sa’busoh-busoh daging basoh gincha bulih makan, kalau busoh ikan buang sakali*,” meat may be eatable though a little high, but fish if at all spoilt must be thrown away at once.

285. *Julus benang lulus kelindan.*

"If cotton will go through, so will thread."

A person must submit to that to which another person of the same class submits. "Do as others do," a phrase to stimulate an undecided person. Hence no doubt the secondary meaning given in Klinkert's dictionary. Favre, who takes the word from him, makes probably a mistake in printing *kelindan*, "a stiff thread," as a distinct word from *kelindan*, "undecided."

286. *Laki pulang kalaparan*
Dagang lalu ditanahkan
Anak di riba diletak-kan
Kra di hutan disusu.

"The husband goes hungry,

"But she can cook for the stranger ;

"The child on her lap is set down

"While the monkey from the jungle is taken to her breast."

A proverbial illustration of the kind of circumstantial evidence on which a man may kill his wife for suspected infidelity. The first two lines are taken from a passage in the *undang-undang* (laws) of Perak ("*laki ber jalan ta'makan, dagang lalu di tanah kan*") ; the last two have been added later probably.

287. *Memakei dunia ber ganti-ganti,*
Yang hidop sesarkan mati,
Dengan mati itu ter nanti-nanti.

"We occupy the world, one succeeding another,

The living thrust aside the dead,

Waiting themselves for death in their turn."

Hodie mihi cras tibi.

Stat sua cuique dies ; breve et irreparabile tempus

Omnibus est vita. Virgil.

288. *Mahal, Imam, murahlah Khatib*
Mahal demam muda sakit.

"Too dear, O Imam, the Khatib's cheaper ;

Fever's expensive, it's so easy to be ill,"

“Mahal-lah Imam,” too dear, O Imam, or, “it won’ top, my good Sir,” has grown into a slang phrase in Perak to signify a refusal. The origin of the phrase is as follows: Raja Che Sulong of Tipus in Perak, an ancestor of the last Raja Bandahara, lost his only son, Raja Allang Ali, who fell ill and died suddenly. The usual train of pious men who haunt the funerals of the great attended on the occasion to perform the necessary ceremonies and to receive the customary dues. The father, inconsolable for the loss of his only son, met them with the exclamation, “*Hidopkan anak temen dahulu, jika hidop berhabis teman jika tidak mahal-hal Imam*. Raise my son to life first; if you can do that, take all I have; if not, you are too dear, O Imam.”

289. *Hilang adat tegah dipakat.*

“Law disappears before a strong combination.”

Justice suffers when there is a party strong enough to set the laws at defiance. The power which a Chinese secret Society exercises would be aptly characterised by a Malay by a use of this proverb.

290. *Handak di telan termangkalan, handak di ludah tiada kaluar.*

“Would you swallow it, it sticks in the throat; would you disgorge it, it will not come forth.” See No. 125.

291. *Hitam, hitam gajah; puteh puteh udang kepal.*

“Black, the blackness of an elephant; white, the whiteness of a handful of shrimps.”

There are many shades of colour among Malays though they all seem brown from a western point of view. A fair complexion is more admired than a dark one. The proverb defends the dark skin and ridicules a fair one.

292. *Orang bahru kaya jangan di utang
Orang lepas nikah jangan di tandang.*

“Don’t borrow from a self-made man

Don’t visit a newly married couple.”

The Asiatic *nonveau riche*, who is unaccustomed to the possession of much money, is an extortionate creditor. There is a good deal of worldly wisdom in the advice to avoid both newly made fortunes and newly married couples, borrowers to the one and visitors to the other being equally unwelcome.

293. *Yang tēgah di sokong, yang rēbah ditindeh.*

“What is firm is propped up; what has fallen is pressed down.”

“Every one bastes the fat hog, while the lean one burneth. Money begets money.”

294. *Yang di sangka tidak menjadi
Yang diam bulih ka dia.*

“What was expected has not come to pass
But the prize falls to him who stirred not.”

The object for which one man strives unsuccessfully may drop into the lap of another who has done nothing to attain it.

295. *Bergalah hilir tertawa buaya
Bersuloh bulan trang tertawa harimau.*

“To pole down-stream makes the Alligators laugh;
To carry a light when the moon shines makes the Tigers laugh.”

The Malays paddle a boat down stream and pole it up stream. To pole down stream or to carry a lamp on a moon-light night is the height of absurdity.

296. *Alang-alang menyelok perkasam bir sampei ka-pangkal lengan.*

“When you are dipping your hand into the fish tub you may as well thrust the arm in up to the elbow.” Do a thing thoroughly when you are about it. “You may as well be hanged for a sheep as for a lamb.”

Perkasam, an evil-smelling preparation of fish preserved in a jar. The fish are put in raw with plenty of salt. The mouth of the jar is then sealed with clay and the mixture is allowed to ripen or ferment for several days, after which the fish may be cooked and eaten. Meat is sometimes treated in the same way.

297. *Terdorong kiki badan merasa, terdorong lidah mas pada nia.*

“If the foot slips the body feels it; for a slip of the tongue gold must compensate.”

One of the aphorisms of Malay judges.

298. *Rajah adil rajah di sembah,
Rajah ta'adil rajah di sangkak.*

“A just rajah is one to be honoured,
An unjust one is one to be resisted.”

299. *Kuat burung kerna sayap,
Kuat ketam kerna sepi.*

“The bird's strength lies in its wings, that of the crab in its claws.”

The strength of a Raja lies in his ministers.

300. *Kuat gajah terdorong chepat,
Harimau melompat-lompat.*

“The strong elephant stumbles and the swift tiger has to spring.”

If the elephant and tiger sometimes blunder, how much more should faults be excusable in man.

301. *Mati rusa kerna jajak mati, kwang kerna bunyi.*

“The deer's death is brought about by its tracks; the argus-pheasant's by its note.”

So the guilty man is discovered and punished by means of evidence.

There are a few points on which I should like to offer some words of explanation before concluding this paper. It is believed that no phrase has been included in the foregoing collection which is not current in a more or less proverbial form among Malays. Many of them, I am aware, hardly answer the description of an old collector of English proverbs who required that the ingredients of a proverb should be *sense, shortness and salt*. The second element seems often to be

wanting. But then it must be remembered that some of these Malay phrases are capable of being divided into two or three or more, only one of which is perhaps quoted at one time. No. 174 is one of these, No. 227 is another. It will be observed that many of these Malay sayings are in couplets; one line of which may sometimes be quoted independently of the other, without impairing the sense. In others the point of the couplets lies in the antithesis, and both lines are essential to the meaning.

Arrangement is of course a difficulty in a collection of this sort. An analysis of proverbs and maxims grouped under appropriate headings was not to be attempted. Alphabetical order has been followed where possible.

As to the proverbs themselves I think I may fairly claim for the Malays that their sayings, besides being pointed and idiomatic, sometimes embody thoughts and ideas well worthy of Western races. Pride and honour are impressed in such maxims as *Bir puteh tulang jangan puteh mata*, "Let the bones whiten but not the eyes" (No. 230), and *Mahu kah orang menghujuangkan govrannia* (No. 170) "Will a man put his salt out in the rain," (*i. e.* expose his family secret to public ridicule). "Do not worship the rich or condemn the poor" (No. 210) is a maxim worthy of the free and independent spirit of the Malay, and I know no Oriental race who carry it out better in practice. Sneers at the assumption of the *nouveau riche*, and instances of a truly conservative belief in good blood and good breeding are plentiful. The successful adventurer is the "blind man who has just found his sight" (No. 20). *Kachang lupakan kulit*, "The bean forgets its pod," (No. 126) conveys a similar sarcasm aimed at the meanness which would attempt to conceal a humble origin. So "A broom bound with silk thread" (No. 100) is the most indulgent comparison which a Malay can find for a person dressed above his rank.

The sound practical sense of English proverbs, such as that which teaches that "a stitch in time saves nine," or that other which recommends "honesty" on the score of its being "the best policy," is not conspicuous among the Malays, but, on the other hand, we find treachery and bad faith, characteristics with which Malays have been credited for generations, often condemned by themselves (See Nos. 137, 143). That they are not wanting in diplomatic cunning is perhaps shewn by proverbs like (No. 165) *Muka berpam-*

dang budi kadapatan, which is quite untranslatable without a long paraphrase. "Know all about your man before you face him" (for you won't find out his real motives at the interview,) is what is intended to be expressed. Suspicion and distrust are inbred in Malays and with only too good reason; plausibility and hypocrisy come in, therefore, for some stinging comparisons (Nos. 76, and 188,) and it is amusing to find an injunction to beware even of friendly offers conveyed in the phrase *Menulong kerbau ditangkap harimau* (No. 187). "Such assistance as the buffalo gets when he is rescued from the tiger."

Ingratitude must be common, or we should not find a cynical warning not to help those in distress. To do so and to meet with the customary return is "to help a dog out of a hedge," (*Melepaskan anjing tersapit*, No. 172) see also No. 251. Among a Mohamedan people we might expect to find that proverbs on the subject of women are governed by theories common to the whole Mohamedan world. This however is not the case. Malay women are not concealed from public view, and enjoy more freedom than falls to the lot of women in most Mohamedan countries. Polygamy is a foreign institution which has never taken root kindly in Malay soil, and though it is lawful for a man to have a plurality of wives, only a small minority avail themselves of the privilege. It is uncommon to find a Malay husband who can induce his wives if he has more than one, to live under one roof. To do so is, according to a common expression, like "keeping two tigers in one cage," (*Harimau dua sa'kandang*.) Contemporary wives must be provided with separate establishments, they generally hate each other and sometimes come to blows if they meet. The first wife looks upon her successor as an unwarrantable intruder who has stolen away her husband's affections and ruined the peace of her home. So well is this feeling known, that it is common for the relations of a girl who is asked in marriage by a man already provided with a wife, to insist that the first wife shall be divorced before the new match is agreed to. Hence the common saying—

Sayangkan kain buangkan baju,

Sayangkan lain buangkan aku.

"If you love your sarong drop your jacket,

If you love the other cast me aside." (No. 103).

The unhappy man who owns two or more households and has to listen in each to the upbraidings and reproaches of the rival ladies must have, say the Malays, "a heart of stone and the ears of a jar," *berhatikan batu bertelingakan tempayan*.

A woman who is one of several wives of one husband is said

Minum chuka pagi hari. (No. 183.

"To drink vinegar in the morning," an allusion probably to the bad temper in which she goes to the day's duties.

The phenomenon of a hen-pecked husband, which a Mohamedan country might hardly be thought to afford, is hit off in a very neat and concise proverb, *Kamudi deri haluwan*, "Steered from the bow" (No. 141). It is by no means rare to find Malay wives possessed of quite sufficient energy and spirit to take command in the house.

Marriage does not exhaust all the proverbs on the subject of women. Feminine nature in the abstract is attacked in an uncomplimentary one, *Kerbau sa'kawan lalu di kandang manusia sa'orang tiada terkawal*, "A herd of buffaloes may be guarded, but not so one human being!" (No. 148).

But this is nothing compared with a damnatory sentence in the Menangkabau Code which figuratively describes a woman as *ibu Iblis saudara segala Sheitan* "the mother of Satan and the sister of all the devils."

Of historical proverbs, which commemorate real events and incidents, a few specimens are given in the preceding collection. Two, which relate to the Dutch, ought not to have escaped the attention of Mr. Klinkert, who, as far as I know, was the first paræmiographer who occupied himself with Malay proverbs—*Pelabor habis Palembang ta'alah*, "The supplies were all finished but Palembang did not fall." It is a punning allusion to an unsuccessful siege (see No. 116) in former days, and still tells with all its original force when some expensive project, barren of result, is under discussion. What the Hollanders did in Perak to merit being handed down to posterity in a proverb directed against those who, like Oliver Twist, ask for "more" has not been preserved in local tradition. But *Aika-lagi-lagi seperti blanda minta tanah*, "Everlastingly more, more, like Dutchmen asking for land" (No. 205), is a phrase with which Perak women will long

continue to rebuke greediness and importunity in their offspring. The French have or had a sarcasm of the same kind directed against our nation, *Anglais* and creditor having been once upon a time synonymous terms:—*J'ai payé tous mes Anglais* would thus mean "I have settled with my creditors!" *

This brings me to another class of proverbs, those which are pointed at the natives of other states or countries and which fasten on some failing or shortcoming and hold it up to ridicule. The countries ridiculed, no doubt, have proverbs which repay with interest those aimed against them. The Perak Malay who prides himself on skill in the use of weapons sneers at Kedah men as *hayam pupuh sabong ta' bertaji*, "Mock gamecocks that fight without spurs." A more effectual way of exciting the wrath of a Javanese cannot be devised than to apply to him a Malay phrase which insinuates a national want of cleanliness; *orang Jawa baberek makan toma* "a Javanese; a wood-pecker that eats insects!"

Natives of Korinchi in Sumatra are supposed to have the power of turning themselves into tigers and are believed to range the forests in that form. The idea has probably arisen from their fearlessness in travelling alone or in very small parties in the most inaccessible districts. "There go the tigers to feed upon buffalo flesh" is a shout which the sight of some harmless Korinchi traders entering an eating-house is almost certain to provoke.

The people of Menangkabau are proverbially dull-witted and the Perak Malays have the following proverb about them, *Menangkabau bingong kalau ada ikan di gosok 'kalau ada kail lauk'*, "The Menangkabau is such a fool that if a fish is within his reach he only says if I had a hook this would be dinner." It would never occur to him, say his detractors, to devise any impromptu means of catching the fish!

The Malays of Perak were denounced by Hamilton a hundred and fifty years ago as "treacherous, faithless and bloody." His description is partly borne out by one or two proverbs about them which will be found printed in the foregoing collection (Nos. 137 and 203.)

Some proverbs are purely local and do not travel beyond the state or district to which they apply. Of this class are

* D'Israeli-Curiosities of Literature, "The Philosophy of Proverbs."

a series of sayings which extol the productions or good things of particular places, on the principle which dictated the line.

“Potatoes grow in Limerick and beef in Ballimore.”

In Perak they say “*Gulei lawang yang paku, ayer Batang Padang, sirih sirih chekus, bras bras Sungkei, jika orang Batu Bara ta’balik ka Batu Bara*, “A curry of fern-shoots, the water of Batang Padang, the betel-leaf of Chekus and the rice of Sungkei; if the Batu Bara man has once tasted these he will never see his country again.” Batu Bara is in Sumatra and all the other places named are in Perak. A similar epitome of the good things to be had in Kampar (Perak) is current among the natives of that district. *Ikan-nia lampam Barang, rambai Pedatang, langsung langsung Penarik, sĕpam sĕpam Gugup, tempuyak Majur*.

So, in the palmy days of native rule in Larut, before the Chinese had defied Malay authority, when the Malay Chief, the Orang Kaya Mantri, exercised almost regal powers and the most profuse hospitality tempted men from other parts of Perak to Bukit Gantang, it used to be said, *Termakankan nasi kerinsing, terminumkan ayer tempayang putih, terlangkahkan merbau bersila ta’balik lagi*, “He who has eaten the rice of the copper pot, who has drunk the water of the white jar and who has passed the *merbau bersila* (a particular tree) will never return.”

The “white jar” still stands outside the Mantri’s house, the tree alluded to is a landmark in the *Bukit berapit* Pass, through which the road from Larut to Kwala Kangsar now runs, but it is to be feared that their virtues have departed. The well-fed guest who invented this flattering sentiment did not foresee the time when Amphitryon would be an exile and the former scenes of festivity silent and nearly deserted.

The following is of more general application and therefore much more widely known. *Handak mati di Malaka, handak makei di Palembang, handak tidor di Batu Bara*, “The place to die is in Malacca, to clothe one’s self Palembang, to sleep Batu Bara.” In Malacca great trouble and expense are taken at funerals, and graves are generally tended with much care and reverence. Palembang is famous for its silk-weaving. The people of Batu Bara are said to under-

stand better than any other Malays how to make a comfortable bed. "They pile up mats and mattresses until it hurts you to tumble off them" is the description given to me.

One more proverb of this class, a local saying in Perak where all the villages named are situated,—

Kalau jadi gajah jangan jadi gajah orang Padang Asam, kalau jadi kurbau jangan jadi kurbau orang Sayong, kalau jadi rayat jangan jadi rayat Pulo Tiga. "Should you be an elephant don't belong to the people of Padang Asam, should you be a buffalo don't belong to Sayong, should you be a peasant don't belong to Pulo Tiga." The allusions are, as may be guessed, the reverse of complimentary. Padang Asam is on the main-road between Ulu Perak and the sea, and in former times before a cart-road was made it was one of the stages at which elephants, the only means of transport, stopped. The people of Padang Asam must in those days have gained an unenviable reputation for overloading their elephants. Sayong boasts of extensive paddy fields, which give plenty of occupation for buffaloes, and they are perhaps better cultivated than similar lands in other parts of Perak. I don't know what particular tyrant gave rise, by local oppression, to the notion that to be a ryot of Pulo Tiga was an undesirable lot.

Without knowing anything about Malays, it would be easy, after reading their proverbs, to pronounce them to be a people given to a country life. Agriculture, hunting, fishing, boating and wood-craft are the occupations or accomplishments which furnish most of the illustrations, and the number of beasts, birds, fishes and plants named in a collection of Malay proverbs will be found to be considerable. Proverbs of this kind are of course of home manufacture. A few, however, which may be met with in books are of foreign origin and may be traced to Hindustani, Persian or Arabic. The proverb *Juhari juga yang mengenal manikam*, "It is the jeweller who can tell a precious stone" (*Hikayat Abdullah* p. 3), is a somewhat clumsy adaptation of the Hindustani *Juhari juhar pachane*. Another very common proverb (nearly equivalent in meaning to the phrase "Blood is thicker than water.") *Ta'kan ayer di parang putus*, "Water is not to be cut with a knife," is almost exactly identical with the Hindustani proverb *Lathi-se pani juda nahin nota* "Water is not to be divided by a stick."

Both Malay and Hindustani furnish equivalents for a well-known French proverb, *Dans le royaume des aveugles les borgnes sont rois*. The Malays say *Ditumpang tiada lang kata bilalang aku-lah lang*, "Where there are no kites the grasshopper says I am a kite." The Hindustani version is shorter and neater, *Jahan darakht nahin wahan rand bhi darakht*, "Where there are no trees even the castor-oil plant is a tree."

Malays who quote the saying, *Barang siapa menggali lubang iya juga terprosok kadalamnia* "Whosoever digs a pit, he shall fall into it himself" (Hikayat Abdullah, p. 165), are innocent no doubt of any intention to borrow from Solomon or from the Arabs. Yet there can be no doubt of course of the Semitic origin of the phrase and the Malay version must be simply a translation. Is it a translation of Proverbs XXVI, 27, "*Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein*," or has it reached the Malays from Mohamedan sources? The latter supposition seems the more likely; and yet the first is not impossible, for it is well-known that *Abdullah bin Abdul Kadir*, from whose Autobiography I take the Malay passage, assisted some English missionaries in translating the Bible into Malay. Those interested in Mohamedan legends will find a story connected with the phrase thus related by Burton (Pilgrimage to El-Medinalah and Meccah, II, 265):—"At about half a mile from the city (Meccah) we passed on the left a huge heap of stones, "where my companions stood and cursed. This grim-looking "cairn is popularly believed to note the place of the well "where Abu Lahab laid an ambushade for the Prophet. "This wicked uncle stationed there a slave, with orders to "throw headlong into the pit the first person who approach- "ed him, and privily persuaded his nephew to visit the "spot at night: after a time, anxiously hoping to hear that "the deed had been done, Abu Lahab incautiously drew "nigh, and was precipitated by his own bravo into the place "of destruction. Hence the well-known saying in Islam, "Whoso "diggeth a well for his brother shall fall into it himself."

Sometimes Malay ideas may perhaps be traced to Buddhist and not to Mohamedan sources. In the *Prataya Sataka* a collection of moral sentences in Singhalese the following passage occurs:

"Though a man were to make an immense heap of sugar
"and plant in the midst of it a seed of the *Kosamba* tree and

“were to pour upon it a thousand pots of milk, yet it will never bear sweet fruit.” *

The Malays say (see No. 7 ante, Vol. 1 p. 89) “Though you plant the *pria* on a bed of sago and manure it with honey and water it with treacle and train it over sugar-canes, when it is cooked it will still be bitter.”

A similar proverb in Hindustani is *Nim na mitha no sech gar ghi se*, “The *nim* tree will not become sweet though watered with syrup and clarified butter.”

One more instance of a Hindustani proverb exactly reproduced in Malay will be sufficient; *Jitni chadar utna pan phailana*, “Stretch your legs according to the length of your blanket” corresponds very nearly with the Malay, *Brapa panjang lanjur bagitulah selimut i. e.* “Suit your blanket to the length of your legs.” Both are equivalent to the English proverb “Cut your coat according to your cloth.” But it must not be thought from these specimens that the Malays are indebted to other nations for many of their proverbs. The contrary in fact is the case; originality of thought, no less than happiness of expression, usually characterises them.

No excuse is needed, I trust, for my having endeavoured at such considerable length to familiarise English students with the peculiar turns of Malay thought. The collection now printed may be very materially added to by a reference to Klinkert’s work and to Favre’s dictionary. The specimens there given have not yet been published in English, and a translation of them has not come within the scope of the present paper. Should, however, the subject be found interesting by those in the Straits Settlements who aim at a thorough intimacy with the Malay language, there is little doubt that the Dutch and French collections will find a translator at some later date.

As an encouragement to those who may feel disposed to supplement existing collections let me quote a passage from a writer already cited who has devoted a paper to “these neglected fragments of wisdom which exist among all nations:—

“The interest we may derive from the study of proverbs is

* Recollections of Ceylon—Selkirk, 148.

“not confined to their universal truths, nor to their poignant
“pleasantry; a philosophical mind will discover in proverbs a
“great variety of the most curious knowledge. The manners
“of a people are painted after life in their domestic proverbs;
“and it would not be advancing too much to assert that the
“genius of the age might be often detected in its prevalent
“ones. The learned Selden tells us that the proverbs of
“several nations were much studied by Bishop Andrews; the
“reason assigned was, because “by them he knew the minds
“of several nations, which,” said he, “is a brave thing, as we
“count him wise who knows the minds and the insides of men,
“which is done by knowing what is habitual to them.” Lord
“Bacon condensed a wide circuit of philosophical thought
“when he observed that “the genius, wit, and spirit of a
“nation are discovered by their proverbs.”
